

Honey on Wounds

Ancient remedy or modern medicine?

Information sheet | No home treatment recipe

The old tale

People have applied honey to damaged skin for thousands of years. Unlike many traditional preparations, specially prepared honey still has a place in modern wound care.

What the evidence says

NHS wound-care guidance includes medical-grade honey products for selected wounds. These can help maintain a moist wound environment and have antimicrobial properties. Their use depends on the wound and a clinical assessment. Food honey and medical-grade wound products are not interchangeable.

Why the kitchen jar is different

Medical-grade wound products are prepared and sterilised for clinical use. Honey sold as food is not manufactured to the same wound-care standard. Oxford Health specifically advises against using shop-bought honey on wounds.

What to take from the old tale

The interesting part is the connection between an ancient practice and specialist modern care. It is not an invitation to recreate the practice with a jar of eating honey.

Hive observations

Norfolk Bees honey is sold for eating. Enjoy it in the kitchen; it is not a wound-care product.

A sensible precaution

Do not put food honey on cuts, burns or open wounds. It may introduce microorganisms or environmental debris. A healthcare professional should advise whether a medical-grade honey dressing is suitable.

Source: Oxford Health NHS: Wound Care Formulary, September 2025